

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 VIENTI 05812 020325Z

16

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 OMB-01

EUR-12 SAJ-01 MC-02 /082 W

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R 020235Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5381

INFO DIA WASHDC/AH

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

USDAO BANGKOK

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

S E C R E T VIENTIANE 5812

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MOPS, MMOL, PFOR, TH, LA, UR, VN

SUBJ: RUSSIAN-BUILT PATROL BOATS ON THE MEKONG

REF: BANGKOK 19517 (DTG 161101Z SEP 75)

1. QUESTION OF POSSIBLE RUSSIAN-BUILT PATROL BOATS ON THE MEKONG (REFTEL) HAS BEEN SUBJECT OF MUCH LOCAL SPECULATION BUT LITTLE HARD INFORMATION.

2. THE ONE REPORT WE HAVE IS THAT MEMBER OF LOCAL BRITISH EMBASSY STAFF WITH NAVAL EXPERIENCE SPOTTED AND FROM HIS QUARTERS (VIC TE 4800.8480) PHOTOGRAPHED TWO PATROL BOATS AS THEY PASSED DON CHAN ISLAND IN THE MEKONG. HE ESTIMATED THEIR LENGTH AT 40 FEET AND SAID THEY WERE ARMED WITH ONE OR MORE 12.7MM MACHINE GUNS EACH. NO INFORMATION AS TO FLAG OR CREW. THIS SIGHTING OCCURRED IN LATE AUGUST OR EARLY SEPTEMBER.

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PAGE 02 VIENTI 05812 020325Z

FILM IS BEING DEVELOPED OUTSIDE LAOS; WE HAVE BEEN

PROMISED COPIES OF PRINTS.

3. BRITISH UNDERSTAND BUT CANNOT CONFIRM THAT THESE TWO

PATROL BOATS ARE AMONG SOME 12 OR 14 RUSSIAN BUILT CRAFT GIVEN TO PATHET LAO BY NORTH VIETNAMESE AND TRUCKED FROM NORTH VIET-NAM TO THE MEKONG. MOST ARE REPORTEDLY STATIONED AT PAKSANE (UF 6031) AND BAN PAK KADING (UF 9527), BUT TWO -- POSSIBLY THOSE SPOTTED BY THE BRITISHER -- ARE SAID TO BE BASED AT BAN HOUEI SAI (PC 4842).

4. IN LIGHT OF INFO CONTAINED PARA 2, ABOVE, WE CANNOT ALTOGETHER DISCOUNT STORIES OF PATROL BOATS. MAY HAVE FURTHER COMMENTS AFTER WE HAVE RECEIVED BRITISH EMBASSY PHOTOGRAPHS AND HAD CHANCE TO STUDY THEM.
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